THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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FOR RELEASE ON RECEIPT:
THE PUBLIC MONUMENT AND
ITS AUDIENCE

The Public Monument and Its Audience, an exhibition of The Cleveland Museum of Art's Department of Art History and Education, opens in the education gallery of the Museum on December 13 and will run through March 8. Twenty-three Ohio public monuments are represented in the exhibition by models, maquettes, drawings, and photographs. The monuments range across time and style from the Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry Monument, dedicated in Cleveland in 1860, to Isamu Noguchi's Portal erected at the Cleveland Justice Center in 1976.

Whether it be sculpture, architecture, or a combination of the two the public monument is first and foremost a work of art and is judged as such, but it also has another responsibility. Marianne Doezema, an instructor in the Department of Art History and Education, organizer of the exhibition and co-author of the catalog, says in the catalog, "It (the public monument) is not only the private expression of an individual artist. It is also a work of art created for the public, and therefore can and should be evaluated in terms of its capacity to generate human reaction."

Ohio's history of public monuments is typical of the American sculptural tradition as it has evolved in the settled regions of the country since the mid-nineteenth century. Format has varied over the years from the portrait figures common in the earlier monuments to the abstract interpretations of today.

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Along with the format the content has also changed. While early monuments paid homage to a particular person or event, more recent monuments have tended to emphasize broad common values and ideas.

Monuments examined in the exhibition fall into six main categories: portrait figures, group/event, functional allegories, architecture with sculpture, pure architecture, and abstract monuments.

Famous Ohioans such as Commodore Perry, Harvey Rice, James Garfield, William McKinley, Marcus Hanna, and Tom L. Johnson are subjects for some of the portrait figures; while other monuments commemorate important events in the history of the state (like Gutzon Borglum's monument Start Westward of the United States). Monuments such as the Tyler Davidson Fountain in Cincinnati make allegorical reference to a beneficial aspect, and still others, such as Noguchi's Portal are abstract images of an idea.

Although they can be categorized by format and content all the monuments have two qualities which unite them, each is a symbol of its time and has a definite link to its community. Public monuments are an artistic and a social statement meant to remind people of a person, an event, or an idea. As such they must communicate with an audience and the strength of that communication is often the definitive factor of a public monument's success or failure.

A 72-page catalog of the show is available. The catalog was written by Marianne Doezema and Dr. June Hargrove, assistant professor of art at Cleveland State University.

Five special offerings are planned along with the exhibition. Marianne Doezema will talk in the exhibition galleries December 14 and 18. Sherman E. Lee, director of The Cleveland Museum of Art, will lecture on December 18 on "Who Needs a Public Monument?" On January 18, 1978, June Hargrove will speak on public

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monuments in Cleveland. In February Marianne Doezema will give a series of lectures on the tradition of the public monument. And on January 21, 1978, a symposium on the subject of public monuments will take place at the Museum. Panelists will be: Hilton Kramer, art critic, The New York Times; Edward Larrabee Barnes, architect; Seth Taft, president of the Board of County Commissioners, Cuyahoga County; and Dr. Lee. Moderator will be Adele Z. Silver, editor of education publications at the Museum and arts editor for WKYC-TV.

All of these events, like the exhibition itself, are free and open to the public, thanks to a generous grant from the Ohio Committee for Public Programs in the Humanities.

The following is a list of the monuments in the exhibition and their locations.

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry Monument, Cleveland
Harvey Rice Monument, Cleveland
William McKinley Monument, Columbus
Lincoln - the Man, Cincinnati
Marcus Alonzo Hanna Monument, Cleveland
Tom L. Johnson Monument, Cleveland
General Philip Sheridan Monument, Somerset
John H. Patterson Memorial, Dayton
The Sentinel, Cincinnati
Cuyahoga County Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Cleveland
These Are My Jewels, Columbus
Start Westward of the United States, Marietta
Tyler Davidson Fountain, Cincinnati
Monuments to Progress in Transportation, Cleveland
War Memorial Fountain: Peace Rising From the Flames of War, Cleveland
Garfield Monument, Cleveland
McKinley Memorial, Canton
National McKinley Birthplace Memorial, Niles
Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, Put-in-Bay, Lake Erie Islands
Harding Memorial, Marion
Helios Guardians, Cincinnati
Memorial to David Berger, Cleveland Heights
Portal, Cleveland

For further information or photographs, please contact David Patterson, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.